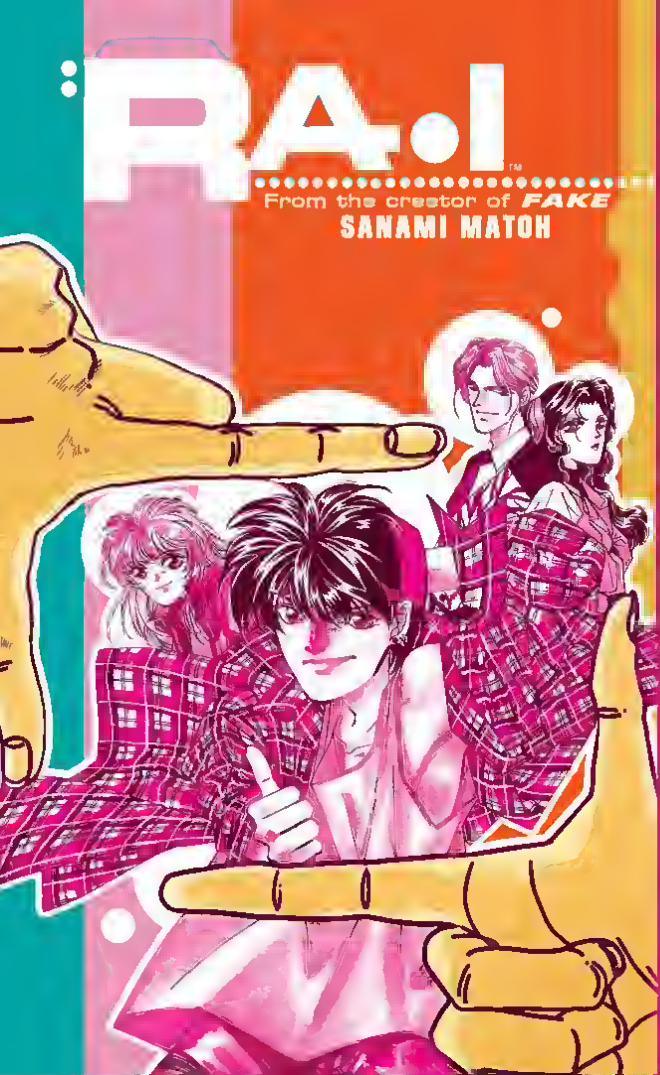
RA.I

From the creator of *FAKE*

SANAMI MATOH



TOKYOPOP®

By Sanami Matoh

TOKYOPOP

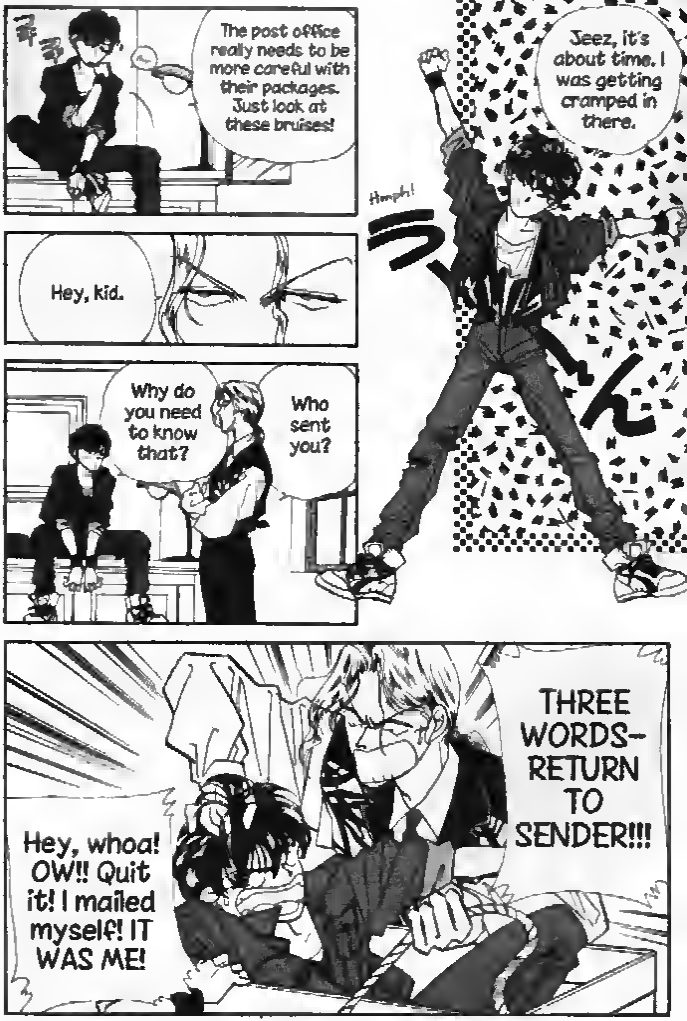
HAMBURG // LONDON // LOS ANGELES // TOKYO

Hey, it's your own stupid fault for breaking the law.
You dirty bastard! You were with the cops the whole time!
A P.I., huh?
Al Foster: Private Detective Agency

RA-I

Package for you, Al.
Thanks. Just stick it over there, would you?
!

No return address. That's odd.
It's a big sucker too.
Huh.
Something's not right here. I hope I'm not in for a nasty surprise.
Whew! Boy, am I glad to be out of there.
CRACK

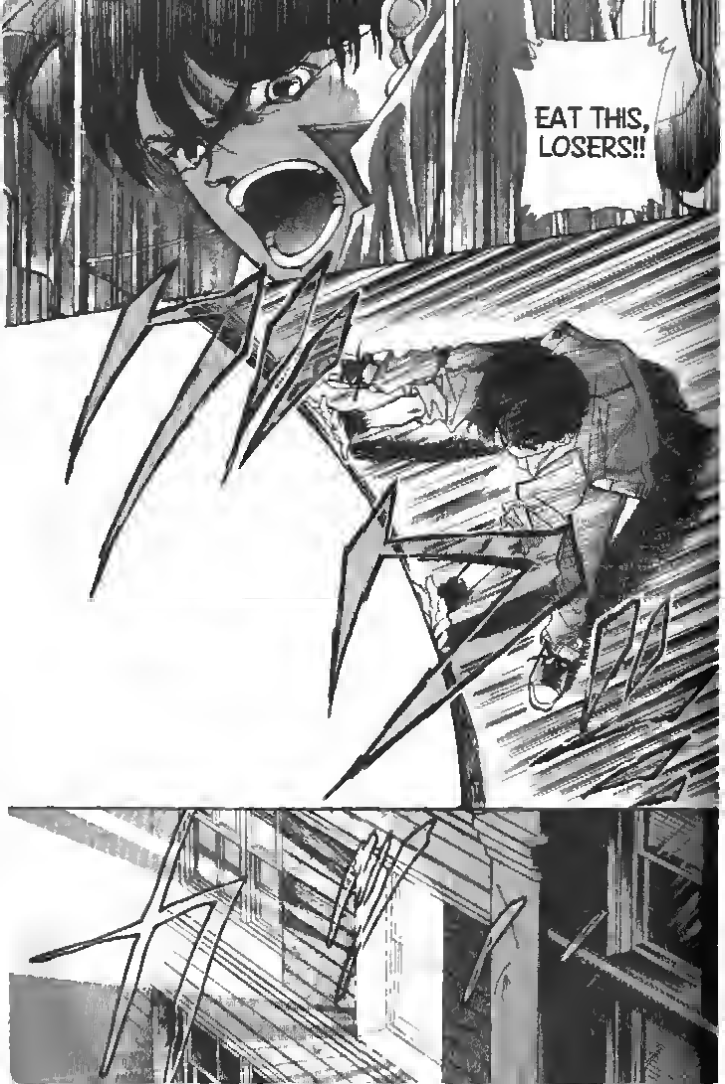

The post office really needs to be more careful with their packages. Just look at these bruises!
Jeez, it's about time. I was getting cramped in there.
Humph!
Hey, kid.
Why do you need to know that?
Who sent you?
THREE WORDS- RETURN TO SENDER!!!
Hey, whoa! OW!! Quit it! I mailed myself! IT WAS ME!

WHAT?!
I'll admit I've been lucky with the ladies... but I was careful! Please don't tell me I'm a dad!!
Don't be crazy. I'm not your kid. Thank god.
You've got one screwed up personal life dude
You stay put.
Ok, I'll wait. A client
Then what do you-
You're not? Phew-
Yes? Can I help you?
M.P.I. Private Detective Agency

That was one helluva "hello", sister. Who are you?
¿HOLY CRAP!
Where's Rai?
"Rai"...? Don't know the guy.
?
?
Don't lie to me. I know you kidnapped him.
KIDNAPPED?!
ME?!

Rei, stop... he didn't do anything.
You tell me now or you'll be sorry!!
WHOA! W-WAIT A SEC!!
Rei?
Hm. You don't look like you've been hurt.
What do you mean? Didn't you get the note I left you?
I'm holding Rei at the above address. Bring $100,000 and make sure you come alone -Kidnapper
Don't even think about calling the police.
He left you a note and I still get accused of being a kidnapper?!
But... that's what he wrote.
Rei!
Hey, it was just a joke.

WHAT NOW?
Kid, wait!!


EAT THIS, LOSERS!!

You knocked them out cold.
Rai, don't you think that was a little over-the-top?
Who... what the hell is this kid?
HEY!
And where'd you get my address?
All right, kid. What did I do to deserve this?

Well, why didn't you just–
I was looking for help. Seemed like you might be the guy to give it.
I think you were arresting some creep. Must've dropped it, I guess.
Found it on the subway.
That's my notebook! Where'd you get it?!
Heh
I'd like to hire you as my bodyguard...
...Mr. Private Detective.
Somebody's trying to kill me.
You want me to WHAT?

Someone's out to kill you, huh?
The clowns we met earlier
Still out cold
.....
I know that lightening flash trick
Even if that is the case...
...why don't you just do that magic trick again and save yourself?
It's not a magic trick.
Like you see on TV. Or in manga.
I've got ESP. Ya knaw, "paranormal powers".
Obviously not taking this well.
That can't be right. Those guys never do that stuff in public! They keep their heads down – try to blend in with the rest of us boring people living obscure lives!
At most, they lurk in the shadows using their powers secretly to save people!

Well, I'm sure as hell not going to live a boring life. But it's not like I show off all the time, either.
It would suck for me if word of this got out. So I usually keep my powers under wraps.
Qu-
(panting)
Well, at least put them to good use and save your own skin.
It's my company's policy to avoid dangerous situations.

On second thought, I'd be honored to protect such a talented young man.
That's $100,000 right?
Cosmo!

I guess I can find another P.I. to give this hundred thousand to...

Oh yeah?

I think you should look for someone else, Rai.
May I ask how the two of you are related anyway?
He's just some foolish playboy.
This guy looks pretty useless.
I'm Rei Spencer, Rai's older sister.
And I'll warn you right now, Al Foster. Stick your nose in where it doesn't belong...
Did you just hear a thunk?
...and you could have a short life.

ドゴォォン
ゴゴゴ
A friggin' grenade? That was specialised for
...So I've noticed.
Mr Spencer.
Tea is served.
Thank you. Set it there, please.
ガシャーン

Sir!
WHO'S THERE?!

Was that a child?
No. I'll be fine.
Sir! Are you hurt?
An earring? But this is...!

It's your brother who's been trying to kill you!
Then it must be him!
It certainly looks like it.
Isn't that one of the Jade earrings the company president presented to Lord Rai?
He may be young, but remember he graduated early. It's not so unusual for a smart kid like that to fall prey to greed and—
He must be jealous that you'll be the next company president and not him.
Enough!

You may go now...
...Rao.
Yes, sir.
Rai...

I assume you're familiar with Spencer Financial?
Yeah. International trade company, right?
Probably one of America's top five—
Wait a minute.
You said your name was Spencer, right?
Don't tell me

The third is our older brother, Rou.
Grandfather has three grandchildren. Rai and I are two of them.
That would explain the liberal attitude to money, I guess.
The president of Spencer Financial is our grandfather.
That's right.
Huh. So, any ideas who the perp might be?
He's been shot at, had cars try to run him down...all kinds of scary stuff.
These attacks on Rai started a month ago.
It's the ESP that's kept him alive. Y'know like a sixth sense about that stuff.
Jeez, I'm surprised he's still with us.

Three days ago...
...someone put a bomb in Rai's room.
This was found along with it, hidden in a corner.
A dagger?
Only our brother Rou has a dagger like that.
He always carries several, for self-defense.
Yes. The dragon design on the hilt...
...is the emblem of our Chinese mother's clan.

You can't say that for sure.
The evidence seems to point pretty clearly to Rou-
That hurt you inside.
What do you think you're looking at?!
A walk? Not at this time of night, you little-
Rai? Where are you going?
Out for a walk.
Rai.

I'll go get him. You stay put, all right?
Christ. Doesn't he realize there're people out there trying to kill him?
Rai adores his older brother.
What do you mean "provoke him"?
Just don't provoke him.
He was the one who found the bomb and the dagger that day.
...but he still won't believe Rou is behind this.
Just don't talk about this stuff with Rai.
It'll only hurt him.

Okay, okay. I'll be nice.
I mean it!
He doesn't seem like the kind of guy to be hurt by something like that.
RRoH!
You'd better be!
Twitch

You're so cute when you're angry!
That's "Ms. Spencer" to you, dolt!

Yes, ma'am.
Just hurry up and find Rai!
I...
...to be good-looking.
Cretin!
I didn't expect him...
!

Rai...?
Hey, kid.
Don't go wandering off like that. Your sister's sick with worry.

13
I can take a walk if I want to.
So. Do you think Rou's out to get you?
...Dunno.

You think a lot of him, don't you?
Yeah. Maybe.
Why not just ask him flat-out?
Then trust him.
Then, if you still can't decide...

...come to me. I'll see what I can do.
I like you a lot too, Al.
Don't go all mushy on me, kid. Just doin my job.
HUG

I heard Rei's voice.
What's wrong?
What? I didn't-
Hey! Rai, wait!

If you want Rei back unharmed, you will come to Office Three at corporate headquarters, alone
-Rou
Damn! We're too late.
Could it really have been Rou?

Rei Spencer. Where is she?

There. Got it.
Ai!
Do you want me to shoot you?
Rei, whoa! It's me!

He went up to the 42nd floor - Office Three.
Said he was going to confront his brother.
Moving on...
Sorry.
Next time, be a good damsel-in-distress and just wait quietly for rescue, hm?
So that's the thanks I get for saving you? That really hurt.
Where's Rai?
Oh!
He what?! We have to stop him!
Listen to me!
?!
Rou isn't the one behind the attacks!

So. You've come...
...Rai.
Rou...

I...trusted you, Rai.
I didn't want to believe you wanted me dead.
But now you've gone too far.
Taking our own sister hostage...
?!
Huh?
...and using her to lure me out!

Whoa!
Rou, wait!
Listen to me! I didn't kidnap Rei!
Enough of your lies!

JUST SHUT UP AND LISTEN!
I'm not lying! I came here to rescue Rei, as well!
Liar! You won't fool me again, Rai!
I'm not lying!

Ergh!

Stop it, both of you!

Rei!
The one that's been trying to kill both of you... It's-
You're both wrong. The man who kidnapped me...
It's me.

Rao!
Only too happy to explain. You see, we are related.
You must be wondering why I'm doing all this.
...then I would inherit Spencer Financial.
Your father had a secret mistress. I'm her son, making me your half-brother.
Accordingly, should the three of you happen to kill each other off...

Bwa ha ha ha!
Of course not. We don't have any half-siblings.
She's right. We've had reason to investigate the matter before.
N-no way!
Could this guy really be related to you?
Dude, are you stupid or what?
AOK!
Besides, one look at your face and a blind man could see we're not related.
Can I say U G L Y?!
Egh.

I don't know who told you that garbage...
...but you were misinformed.
Watch your mouth!
Nyuh hu
...it's a wonder he had time for any kind of sex life at all!
Plus, Dad was such a late bloomer...
RA!
Well, I'm not!
...in light of your service for the family, I'm willing to overlook-
Rao...
UWAAAA!
Holy-!

...that I "thank" him properly!!
Thanks to this creep...
...I thought my own brother was out to kill me.
Wait, Rai!
It's only polite...

!!
Forty-two floors is a long way to fall.
Mommy!!
Yipes!
Like the view?

Rai!
Say hi to Satan for me!
Eep?

Just kidding.
!!
Rai
Did I getcha?
Relax, I wasn't really going to drop him.
I just wanted to teach him a lesson.
Oh, my God!
Mommy, I'm dead?
Nah, he's still twitching.
Looks like we've got a jumper.

Are you all right?
Yeah, I'm fine. It's just a scratch.
Heh!
I'm sorry.
I should've trusted you.
...I trusted you completely, either.
S'okay. I can't really say...
But now the mystery's solved, and you're still my favorite big brother.
Rai...

It sounds like the two of you owe Mr. Foster a thank you.
Yeow! Ouch!
Why, you little devil! You'll pay for that!
Great. Now I don't have to listen to you crying "I miss my brother! I miss my brother!" all the time.
Heh, heh!
GRR.
I so did NOT cry, you jerk!
Take that!
I don't owe that man one red cent!
Hardly. Why do I owe him anything?
This is a first. Normally the guy falls for you first, not the other way around.
But, I must admit, he did come in handy.

Since he's obviously taken a shine to him...
...I'm sure Mr. Foster—Al...is a good man.
Wh-what?! Are you implying that I lo... like him? That's r-ridiculous!
Rou!
Hmm. You're so quick to deny it. That's a dead giveaway.
Be that as it may, Rei has good instincts when it comes to people.
Wake up!
Al...
...Al!

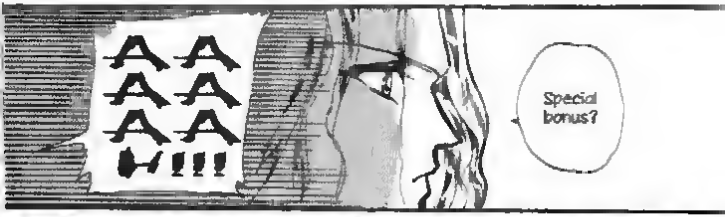
Who...?! I don't remember ordering a wake-up call.
It's past noon.
Rei? What are you doing here?
Get dressed!
I seriously did not!
Here. This should cover the repairs to your office. And...
Come all this way to ask me out on a date?
What do you mean, "unfortunately"?
Unfortunately, I'm wearing sweatpants.
...well... you were... um...
...very helpful to us the other day.
Thank you.

Rei.
What?
O-of course not! I needed to give you the money for the repairs. Doesn't hurt to be polite while I'm here, does it?
I wouldn't go out of my way just to say thanks to you.
You came just to tell me that?
KISS
How about a date next Sunday?

YAAAAAA!!!
Yowch!
How dare you k-k-... do that to me, you pervert!
Whoa! Rei, calm down!
I'm sorry! I apologize!
Now put them down before you kill me!
What are you two up to?
At least they seem to have got it off.
Oh, I thought Rei was alone.
Rai.
This way, guys. Over here.

You're not very observant for a P.I., are you?
Moving.
Hey! What the hells going on here?!
What the hell?
This one, right?
That room over there
No duh! I wanna know who's moving!
Me. ♡
URK.
Aw, come on. It's not every day you get the chance to hire a 13-year-old college graduate with ESP. Plus...
Like hell I'm hiring you!
I'm ready to move out of my parents' house, but this town's a tough place. For a young guy like me to make it by himself.
So, I thought you could hire me on as your assistant.
And this is the best part...
Not on your life, you little brat!

...I come with a special bonus.


AAAAAA!!!!
Special bonus?

You're hired. You drive a good bargain, kid.
Can't take the credit for that one. Rou wouldn't let me out of the house unless Rei came along.
What?!

What are you doing with all my things?!
That's my bed! My mirror!
Don't ask me, lady. I'm just paid to move the stuff.
I come with a live-in chaperone. ♡

Wait just one minute. I haven't agreed to all this.
I am standing right here, you know!

RA!!!
What's the problem? I do have two spare rooms, after all.
Yeah, dude. What's the big deal? I mean, Rou's already said yes. Besides...
...you know you really want to stay here with Al.
Rai...
See You Again.

RA - 1 / END

THANKS TO
MIWA MATSU SENSEI, TO MINORU-YAMAMI, TOMOKO-MORI, AND MIZUHO-HARA.

RA-I
Act-2
Kitten on Parade

NEW YORK PM 2:00
Coke
Hey, Rai!

Thanks, Billy!
Right.
Rai...

I need your help.
Who's talking to me? It's almost like a voice in my head.
Rai, help me.
?!
More ESP, maybe?
Where are you?
?!
Right beside me? Where?
Right beside you.
キョロキョロ
?
Meow

Meeeow
カリカリ
Al Foster
Private
Detective
Agency
I'm
back!

Hey.
Hmm.
Yeah, but never mind that, I-
Get the receipt signed?
Hey, um, Al...?
Did you return that lost dog back to his owner?
Besides, old folks like kids
Leave the flirting to the grownups, twerp.
That dog's owner was no spring chicken either!
This is NOT fair, Al. When are you going to give me one of the good jobs? Why do I get all the old clients and you get all the hot babes?
Let me talk, dammit!
Good work.
Awesome
YES, DAMMIT.

So quit your bitching and go find us some new clients.
OW!
Oh yeah!
Therefore, you get Grandma and Grandpa, I get to flir--um, look after the ladies. End of story
I'm the boss, you're the underling. I say who gets which clients.
Good afternoon, Miss. What can I do for--
She's right here.
Why didn't you say so?!
WHAT?!
I did bring in a new client. A young lady in fact!
...you?
Well it IS technically female.
Meow

Ha. Ha. Bet you thought that was funny, didn't you, you little brat.
Whoa... take it easy...
Meep! Meep!
Al Foster Private Detective Agency
What, did you teach it tricks or something?
HUMPH!
Hey! I'm being serious here! This is no ordinary stray cat
Meeow!
No, you jerk! She's-
CRACK
BAKUN
"CRACK"
Mew?

UPH!
I swear, I've never seen such a sloppily-run business in my life!
Not only that, I can't believe you had the gall to hire us on such paltry salaries! I'll have you know I graduated from Harvard with a Masters in Business three years early! I even brought along my genius kid brother!!
Three whole years!
Um, hello?
I was wondering where you'd been all this time.
Ha ha...
It's taken me over a week just to get your files organized.
Hey, you came to me.
Mutter
I'm the kind of elite secretary you could never hope to hire in a billion years! Do you understand that, you air-headed, womanizing twit?!

God Listen to them
Okay, forget it, then.
YIKES! I'm sorry! I'm sorry! Please don't kill me!
Say it again. Go ahead, I dare you.
WHAT DID YOU SAY?!
Adults. Always around when you don't need 'em...
...but when you do want their help, they're useless.

Looks like I'll have to handle this case on my own.
Doesn't leave me much choice

So Rou's stuck at the company, buried under the mountain of paperwork Dad left behind.
I'm going on vacation.
Well, Dad'll never actually do anything.
Dad
Dad

Are you sure?
I'm Rathe. Rathe Goldman.
By the way, what's your name? There's a human somewhere in there, right?
Hup!
Yeah, it'll be fine.
I'm using the kitten as a medium, to boost the range of my telepathy.
I'm in a...situation I can't deal with as a human.
Why'd you take the form of a kitten?
That's so cool. I'm pretty good at telekinesis, but my telepathy's really low level.

I can't use telekinesis at all.
That's why I had to look for someone who could "hear"...
...my telepathic voice. Please, Rai! You have to help Papa!
When I was really little, Papa mixed with the wrong crowd.
He was sent to prison but came out a reformed man five years ago. He's been working an honest job, looking after me and Mama ever since.
Your dad?
Then, three days ago...
What happened? Tell me everything.

Hey there, Ralph.
Dennis!

We've got something lined up for one week from now. It's a Jewelry store Job.

Well, I changed my mind.

What are you doing here? I told you I'm going straight now. I'm done. I thought you'd accepted that.

Believe it or not, this place is using the exact same security system as the bank we knocked over ten years ago.
Just like old times.
It would be a real easy job for you.
Whoa, don't be so hasty, okay pal?
I won't do it. Find yourself another guy.
No, Dennis. I promised I'd go straight, and I meant it.
Promised who? Your lovely wife and cute little daughter?

But, you see those guys over there? They're a little jumpy, y'see. If I don't keep them in line...
...they might shoot your wife and kid, just for the hell of it.
Heh heh heh
Nothing... yet.
You bastard! What have you done to Janice and Rathe?!
So, more interested in the job now, Ralph?
That slimy bastard! He's holding you and your mom hostage.

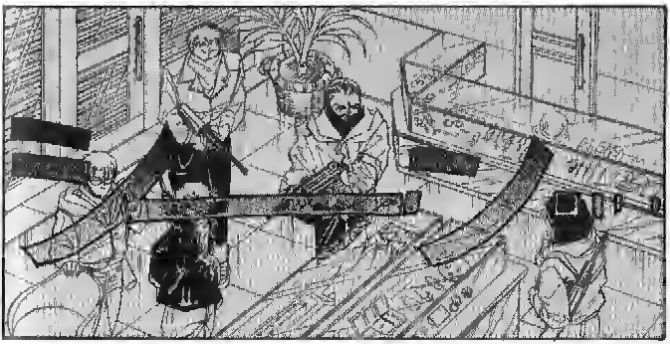
ten times
My hearing is ten times as sensitive as a normal person's.
And all that noise hasn't driven you nuts?
Jeez.
Um... how?
Papa didn't say anything, but I overheard the whole conversation.
Those men are still out there, watching us. Mama and I are trapped in the house.
Nope. I can control it.
So I focused my hearing on them and listened in. That's how I overheard Papa and Dennis.
A bunch of really suspicious men had been hanging around the house all day, making Mama worried.

First things first...
Let me take care of this, okay?
Meow!
Time to go.
You'll be safer if you stay put, anyway. Even if you escaped, this is too much for you to handle on your own.
How are we going to do that?
...let's find out which jewelry shop they're going to hit.
DODGE
ヒュッ

YER DEAD MEAT, KID!!
And who're you callin' old?!
Beating up on a kid is a pretty low thing to do, old man.
?!

I already know you're working with Dennis, dude, so don't bother playing dumb.
Tsk tsk! Move and I'll cut ya
ピク
And don't expect anyone else to happen down this alleyway
If I find you've lied, I won't come back and let you out.
ぱたっ
No sweat off my brow, really. The law's real lenient on minors like me.
I want the whole plan for the heist – don't leave out any details. Otherwise, well, then I'm just going to have to kill you.
Doesn't matter to me either way dude. Ha! I just might kill you anyway! Nya ha ha!
ゴクリ
Hey! You aren't seriously going to leave me in here for the next three days, are you? Well? Kid? KID?!

Done?
Yeah.
JEWEL



ジャキッ
WHO'S THERE?!

About time you guys got here.

Heh

Have at it, boys. Grab anything that ain't nailed down.

NOT IF YOU GET "CLEANED UP" FIRST, BRAT!
A kid? How the hell did you get in here?
What say we clean up these lowlifes and go home, eh Ralph?
Which one of you is Ralph Goldman?
Me, but why...?
I'm a friend of your daughter's, sir.

EAT LEAD!
Dennis, what the hell are you doing?! He's just a kid!
So what? It's his own damn fault for sneaking in here. Who's going to care if I off a brat or two?
Ha!
Hey now, watch where you're pointing that thing.

Someone could wind up getting hurt.
Why... you...
DIE, FREAK!!

What the hell!
And I've got just the punishment to fit your crime.
You guys have been very naughty.

Mr. Goldman, get behind me!
All right, guys, it's time for you...

...TO HIT THE SACK!

?!
Throw down your weapons and come out of the store with yaur hands above yaur heads.
This is the palice. We know you're in there.
Uh-oh!
I repeat. We have you completely surrounded.
Thraw dawn yaur weapans and came aut with your hands up!
AND I MEAN NOW, DAMMIT!!
This whole building's soundproofed, so no one could've heard the gunshots. Did someone tip them off?

I managed to sneak out and leaked the plans to a guy I know. Knew he'd squeal to the police.
Dennis couldn't watch me all the time.
Huh?
Yes. I tipped them off.
That's okay.
But now you'll get arrested right along with the rest of these creeps!
Papa.
Besides, they should give me a break for tipping off the police and turning myself in.
As long as they all get locked up and Janice and Raphe are safe, I don't care what happens to me.

No way, Mr. Goldman! I can't let you get arrested.
I mean, Rathe would be devastated seeing the police drag you off again.
Hmmm...
It appears they're all unconscious, sir.
Hide!
What the hell?!

Mind if I head home now?
Inspector.
Ah!
No can do. It's the middle of the night, so we're short handed. You're conscripted for the duration. Go check the top floor and see if there're any more perps zonked out up there.
What?! That's not fair!
No disrespect, sir, but there's no way in hell I'm going up there. I'm outta here!
Want me to send someone with you?
You're short handed, right? I'll be fine by myself.
Later
Old fart!
Shoosh!
All right, all right, I'll do it.
But you'd better be sure to "misplace" those tickets for me.
...how about you pay off those 30 outstanding traffic tickets of yours, hm?
Have it your way, then. But, before you go...
Citations
All 30 of you aren't going anywhere. Ah!

The hell?!
Hey Al !
Al... !
What are you doing here?!
I was wondering where you'd gone to! If you're going to be a thief at least learn how to be a good one and don't get caught, okay?!
I am NOT a thief!
I've got a good reason for being here, and I'll tell you all about it later! But right now, I need you to get this guy out of here without the cops seeing him.
... which makes him friends with the sleeping beauties downstairs, doesn't it?
Okay, forget I asked what you're doing here, Rai.
But this guy's a different story. He's in a jewelry store, in the middle of the night...

Well... sorta. But he didn't want to come, they forced him! C'mon Al, you've gotta trust me! Please!
He could be the devil himself, and I'd still let him go.
He has a beautiful daughter tearfully awaiting his safe return!
You gotta start telling me these things sooner, Kai!
Leave it to me.
The one trick that never fails
Besides?
Besides ...

Finished checking the upstairs already, Al?
...No, sir. Was just on my way.
The tickets. I know, I know.
We'll get moving then, or else!
So that's what happened.
PHEW

It was this putz that snuck those two out of the emergency exit, unseen you know.
I'm so proud of you... unlike some other putz I could name.
And you did that all by yourself, Rai? Good work!
Hello.
Who?
Awe-some! They're here!
Rai! Why didn't you warn me? Do I look suitably dashing?
Mr. Goldman and his beau-tiful young daughter.
Think nothing of it. It's all part of the Job. By the way, I heard you brought your daughter.
I can't thank you enough for all the help the other day, Mr. Foster.

Hello.
That's the same age as Rai.
I'm thirteen.
My, aren't you the lovely young lady. May I ask how old?
I'm glad to finally meet you, Rai.
Yeah, this is the first time we've met in person, isn't it?
Thank you so much for saving my Papa.
Thanks, Rai.

Is it okay if I come and visit you some time?
Um, yeah— Sure.
Well, she was certainly a very pretty young lady.

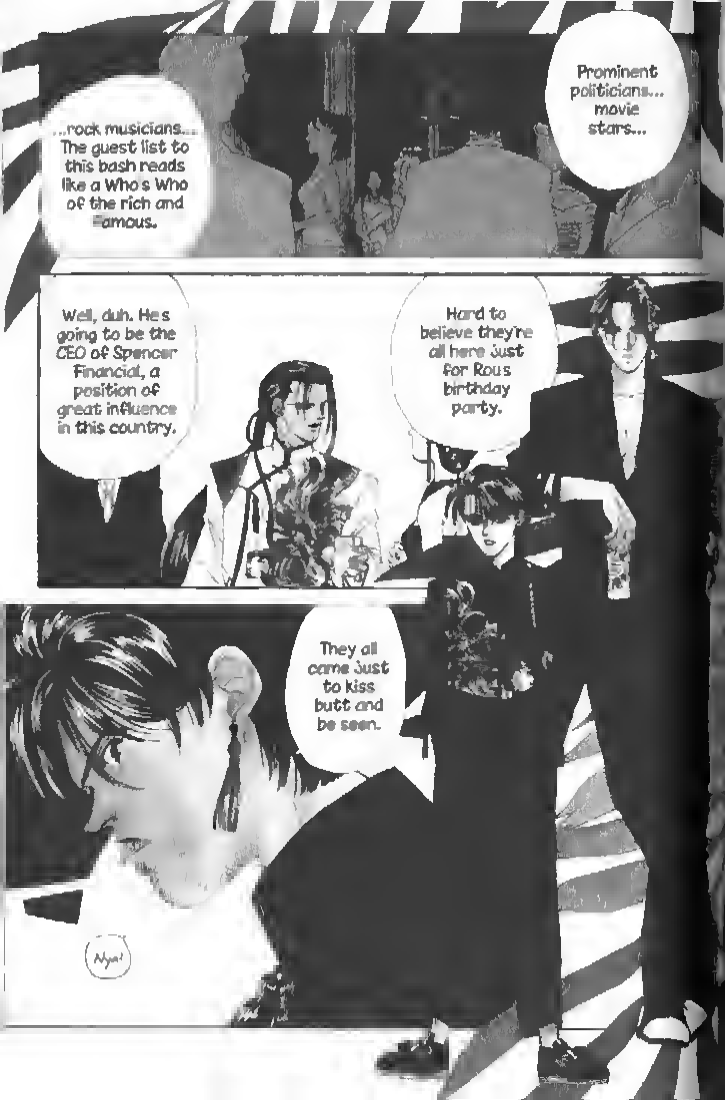
Jeez, why do you adults always have to play matchmaker?
Lost your mental act of the guitar
Oh, nothing. Just thinking that you two would make an adorable couple.
Well, yeah... Why are you looking at me like that?
Gives me the creeps
H-hey! Quit that! ¿ Leggo!
Ooh!
You're so cute when you blush!
Only thirteen...
That's way too young...!
Can't disagree with you there. Maybe I should've realized sooner.
God, he is so pathetic.
She was really beautiful but thirteen? Jailbait! Life is so not fair!

I will never ever believe another word out of your mouth.
Don't sulk, Al. I'll find a nice, human girl for you. Closer to your age, too. Promise.
Ha ha!
Oh! NO! She found them! I am so dead!
And every single one of them a traffic citation! Just how many of these are there?! Five... ten... fifteen...
Oh my God! Where did this mountain of bills come from?!
YOU COMPLETE AND UTTER UNBELIEVABLE LOSER!!!
What's Rei's problem?
UwAAAAH!!
He used them as a threat to get me work for him for free. Again.
Can you believe them? Has such a scatter
Rei. Lovely, beautiful, merciful Rei. The Inspector's letting me off these fines.
So forgive me please?

NEW YORK
PM 8:00
Back to a long, happy life as a stray!
Mew~
UGK!
HIYA!
Sigh...

RA-I

RA-I


...rock musicians... The guest list to this bash reads like a Who's Who of the rich and famous.
Prominent politicians... movie stars...
Well, duh. He's going to be the CEO of Spencer Financial, a position of great influence in this country.
Hard to believe they're all here just for Rou's birthday party.
They all came just to kiss butt and be seen.
Nya!

RA-I
Act-3
Perfect - Game

Rei's always surrounded by a horde of suitors at these things.
Happens every year. And so does that.
God knows what they see in her, 'cause I sure don't see it.
She's always been popular with the guys, even when she was little.

Most of them are probably more interested in the money than her.
I mean, not only is she beautiful, but whoever marries her becomes part of the Spencer family and shares the Spencer fortune.
At least pretend to be civilized, would you?
This is a polite social function, after all.
If you don't take the first step, one of them just might snatch her right out of your arms, y'know.
Mind your own damn business.
OW!
Shaddap, you little shrimp. Like I'm going to take your advice.
Jeez! I try to be nice and give you some advice, and what's the thanks I get? A hit me!
Do you two mind?

I don't believe that's any of your business.

What's wrong? None of those adoring fanboys catching your eye?
Yo.

Now that you mention it
Nope. Probably not.

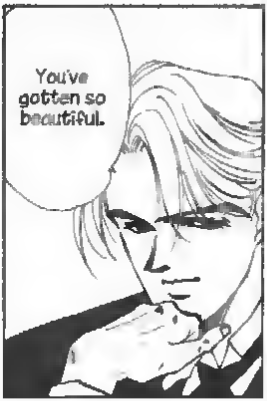
Capturing Rei's attention—and holding it—has never been an easy prospect.

Maron
Why, me?!

Ack!

Colin!
You know that guy?
Yeah. He and Rou have been best friends since high school.
I'm Colin Feath, Rei's fiancé.
Oh, a friend of?
I see, so he's Rei's-
Uh-oh.

Well, yeah, technically they are engaged. But it was something our parents decided while they were still toddlers.
It's not like it's carved in stone, though. If either Colin or Rei said no, the engagement would be dissolved in a heartbeat. Of course, everyone knows this, so both of them have to keep beating off suitors with a stick.
Damn-
Phew


You've gotten so beautiful.

I'd never miss Rou's birthday party.
I know your work keeps you so busy, I was afraid you wouldn't be able to make it.
Colin, it's so wonderful to see you again.

Yes?
Rei...

Isn't it about time you gave it some serious thought?

Oh?

It wasn't flattery.
Colin, you know how I hate flattery.

About our marriage.
Al Foster. I hear he's a private detective.
Are you in love with him?
Colin, I...
Are you thinking about him?

What?! Me...with him?! L..!
I'd better get back to my work.
Rei. I'm not giving up on you.
Why on earth does he think I'm in love with that blockhead?
.....

Al Foster Private Detective Agency
RING RING
Hello. Al Foster Private Detective Agency.
Oh, hello Colin.
Al Foster Private Detective Agency
Yes...yes, that sounds good... all right, I'll see you there. Bye.
Al Foster Private Detective Agency

Where are you off to?
Al.
It's a personal errand. Where I go on my own private time is none of your concern.
THUMP
Is there a problem?
THADUMP

GRR!
Private time comes out of your paycheck too, you know.
Standard hourly rate, rounded off to the nearest quarter hour
You wanna know where she's going?
That is NOT what I meant to say.
FINE!
Hello, again!
She stopped by for a visit.
Aha. I see.
So, where'd she go?
I asked Rathe to tune in her hearing and listen to Rei's call.
Where was Lili when you fainted?
You know?
'Course.
Hah hah hah.

Ten bucks and you've got yourself a deal.
Heh heh!
What?
You're getting off cheap, kid.
Is that so?
Uh huh. Right!
Dream on, twerp. I'm not that desperate.
Bah! Bye now!
Did I mention that Colin is an excellent athlete, a brilliant scholar, a shrewd businessman, and on top of all that, a really nice guy? He could have any woman he wanted.
However...
10¥
WHERE?!
...he's head over heels in love with Rei.
That was not a very nice thing to do, Rei.
Say, um! Wanna go on a date? Rather?

Not at all suspicious, eh. ? ♭

I don't know.
What's going on over there?
R... aROu?
Ah. I didn't expect to find you here.
I didn't mean to startle you like that.
Re-
Hm. Isn't that...?

Let's get out of here.

Looks like it.
A gay couple?

Just drop it, okay?
I'd never have taken you for the jealous type.

If you truly have feelings for Rei, why don't you just tell her?
Who-ever said!-
It's so obvious, Al.
It just isn't...me.
You should be aware that Colin is head and shoulders above the countless other suitors Rei has had.
The outcome of this little game is, of course, ultimately up to her...

...but I think it's also, in no small part, up to you, as well.
Right. So now all I have to do is create a better impression than Mr. Perfect.
This may take a miracle.
I have a message for you, Mr. Spencer.
Your presence is requested back at the office.
Tell them I'm on my way.
Good luck, Al.

I...don't know, Colin.
Forget that our parents have already declared us "engaged". What they think doesn't matter. The most important thing here is how you feel about this, Rei.
I love you.
But I'll tell you this. I'm serious about you, Rei.
That's okay. I won't rush you.

Now that I think about it, I've always admired Colin.
He's so charming, so considerate.
He attracts attention wherever he goes.
He, on the other hand...

It's impossible to tell when he's being serious. He always does the stupidest things. He's just so...so...
...is an irresponsible, lazy, rude, womanizing, childish, insufferable good-for-nothing lout!
.....
...so warm.

You can watch the phones while I run an errand.
Y-yes...I got back a little while ago. Good timing.
Oh, you're back already?
what?
I think it's also, in no small part, up to you as well.
About Colin...
Rei...

OH SH-NO! DON'T LOOK!!
Give those back!
Oh. More paperwork?
ぱらぱら
Colin Feath
Sex - Male
Birthday 19
Blood typ
...academic history, work history, etc, etc.. What in the world?
Colin Feath. Birth date, blood type, medical history...
Here it comes ...
This is an entire file on Colin's personal information.

Nobody. I did it myself.
Mutter
Umm...
Who asked you to do this?
Who. Asked. You.
Got it?!
I'm going to the bank. Those files had better be neatly organized by the time I come back!
Grud
If you've got time for that, why don't you do some work for once?!
I won't be long.
Yes, ma'am.
Grrrr
Just get lost over there, Inkard quality agent!
OUCH!

Dammit!
I wonder why he's so interested in Colin...
Al Foster Private Detective Agency
Hello! What can I do for...
Al Foster Private Detective Agency
Coming!

Got a minute?
So. Did you want to hire me for something?
Here.
Thank you.
Hmph.
How do you feel about Rei?

I'm not one to go beating around the bush.
Get straight to the heart of the matter, why don't you.
Well, it's none of your damn business.
I love her.
I'm not afraid to confess my feelings for her—to you or anyone.
It seems I differ from you in that respect.

Those are just words. They say nothing about the depths of your feelings.
The true extent of some emotions can't be expressed in anything but words.
TELL
TELL

Hello, Foster Detective Agency.
Oh, Inspector. What's up?
She's what?!
Inspector!

We bagged three of em when they tried to make a run for it, but the other two panicked, grabbed some hostages, and holed up on the second floor.
A little after noon, a group of five armed robbers stormed into that bank, waving guns and threatening people. The usual stuff.
We have a hostage situation.
What the hell's going on over there?
One of those three customers...
Four. One teller and three customers.
How many hostages?
!
...is Rei.

This whole damn thing is probably going to drag out for...
We know the robbers have guns, and they've shot one of the hostages. We don't know who they shot, the extent of their injuries, or even if they're still alive.
Just going to the bathroom, sir.
Can't hold it any more..
AL! Where the hell do you think you're going?! Don't do anything stupid, you hear me?!
...hour~
GONE

I'm going with you.
ニギッ
Don't think you can use this to make yourself look good.
Whatever.

No! All I'm seeing out there are cruisers!
Did they bring the car yet?
Are you okay? Hang in there!
Ugh!
He needs to get to a hospital, and quickly. The bleeding still hasn't stopped.
These guys are nothing more than small-time thugs.
Hmm, only two of them...
...But if I'm not careful, the other three hostages could get caught in the crossfire

Al...!
Get up!
WHERE THE HELL IS THE CAR AND OUR MONEY?!
OR DO YOU WANT ME TO BLOW HER BRAINS OUT?!
Damn. They're starting to panic.
Give me the mic.

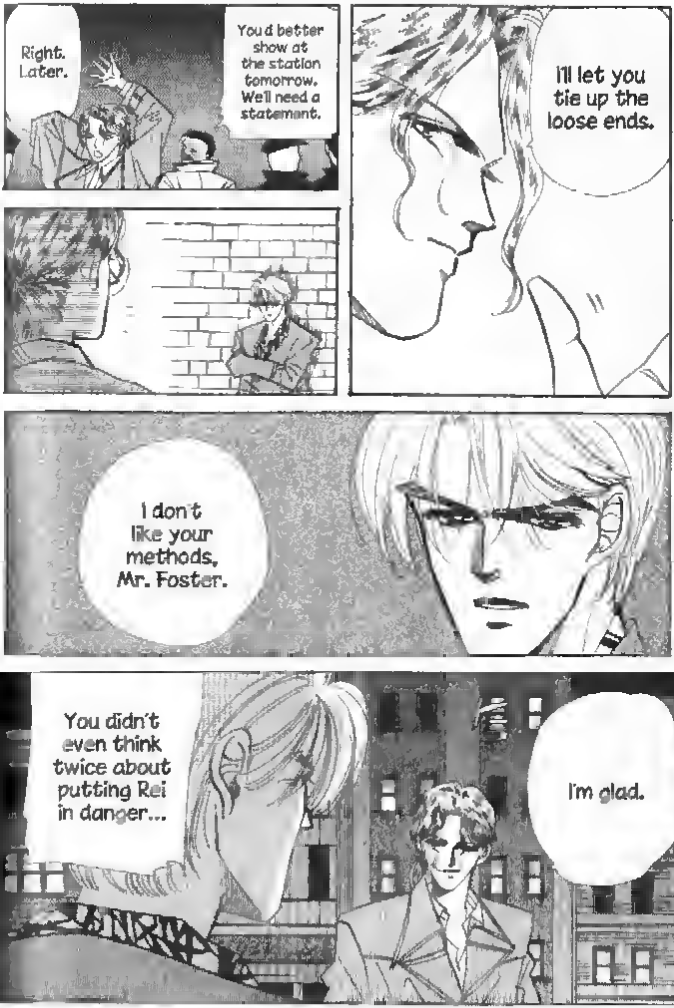
NO WAY! IT'S ALREADY BEEN OVER AN HOUR!!
It'll be at least another 30 minutes.
Please stay calm. We're getting them for you, but these things take time.
Wait! They've got Rei at gunpoint in there!
Exactly why I'm going in now.

Why you-
Actually, I'm counting on them doing just that.
And when they use her as a living shield, what's your plan?
Ready or not, here I come!
You stay put. I don't have the time or inclination to argue tactics with you.
Uph!

REI!!!

ERGH!
Hold up!
Na!
ARGH!!

HAVE YOU COMPLETELY LOST YOUR MIND?!
Hey, it all worked out in the end, didn't it? Besides, you were planning a forced entry anyway, right?
What the hell kind of stunt was that?! Do you have any idea what would've happened if any of those hostages got hurt because of your crazy heroics...?
Well?! You dumbass!!


Right. Later.
You'd better show at the station tomorrow. We'll need a statement.
I'll let you tie up the loose ends.
I don't like your methods, Mr. Foster.
You didn't even think twice about putting Rei in danger...
I'm glad.

No.
Are you hurt?

A little. But I'm used to it.
Were you scared?
I'm sorry, Rei.
Al...

So that's how it is.

You needn't worry, those two will be just fine...
I lost. Completely.
...Rou.
I'm sorry I had to ask you to go through all that.
It's okay. I would have done it even if you hadn't asked.
I meant it when I said I loved her.

She was always right by my side...
...a beautiful smile on her face.
I guess I just took her for granted...
...and while my back was turned, another man came in and swept her away.
You're going out for drinks later, right?
I'll join you.
Thanks.
The one thing every man needs is a good friend.

Not long.
How long 'til you're finished?
Rei?
Sure. I'd like that.
Once you're done, would you care to join me for dinner?
Gimme some sugar. ♡
Al, cut that out! Al! Oooh, you're hopeless.
A- Al...?
Mmm.

Mmm...
Mph!
Well, you two are certainly getting along a lot better.
How come you always have such incredibly bad timing?!
Oh, quit your whining. I'm an employee here too, remember?! I can come and go as I please.
Nya ha!
Just when it was getting good too!
Rai!
Heh, heh!

You're the one in need of an attitude adjustment, dude! I mean–
You're really starting to get too big for your boots, buddy!
Hey! Watch that mouth of yours, kid. You may be an employee, but don't forget who's the boss.
Just who do you think's going to clean up this mess?! Ai! Rai! COME BACK HERE!!
–it went perfectly, right?
Just watch your mouth, brat. I mean it.
Cut it out, you two! You're making a real mess of all the paperwork!
Ack! The files!
Nya ha ha!
Wa ha ha!
Nya ha ha!
PERFECT GAME/END

Small Prince

Aren't your friends allowed to come out to play?
I see you around all the time, but you're always alone.
Do you want to play with me?

RA-I

Act-4

Small Prince

Whoa! Hold it! Rei, calm dow— YIKES!!
Al!! You did it again, didn't you?!
Al Foster Private Detective Agency
Back at the Al Foster Private Detective Agency. It's been three years since Rei and I started working for Al.
Don't flatter yourself!
Jealous?! Why should I be jealous, you two-timing twit!!
Grrrr!!
J- Jealousy doesn't become you, you know.
I am calm!! You've been sneaking around with female clients behind my back again! I know you have!
Rai Spencer. 16 years old.
Hey you two! Turn it down a notch or six, will you?

Hey, get that, would you?
Life's been good to him the last three years.
What, you taking off again?
Huh?
Yeah. Gonna shoot some hoops with Jay and the guys after I finish tutoring Rathe.
Rai.
Not as well as two other people I could mention.
Tutoring Rathe again? You two are certainly seem to be getting along well.
Ah, to be young again.
See ya later!
Hm?

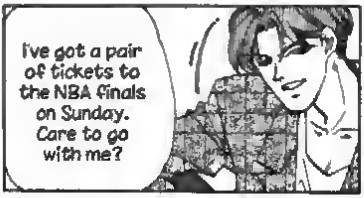
Let's go to the park.
Oh! Now I get it!
First you do this... then you apply this formula...
...and this is the answer you get, right?
Yup. You got it.
Yay! All done!
God... About friggin time
We could get through this in half the time if somebody wasn't so thick-skulled
Well excuse me for being normal, Mr. I-Finished-Grad-School-Already!
Hey!
Nope.
Watch the attitude, kiddo.

Client of mine works with the NBA. I got these two front-row tickets as part of my fee.
How's them apples?
Tickets to the NBA Finals!
What do you make of these?
NBA
NBA
Omigod!
Hey! Don't push! I'm gonna–
Grr
WHOA!
Quit teasing and hand it over, Rai. I'm not letting you say no.
Well, I was going to give you one, but after what you said, I dunno...
And it's a Bulls game, too! I wanna go, I wanna go, I wanna go!!

Okay.
It's next Sunday, so don't forget, okay?
RH-I
Okay, okay. Take it.
Rai, wait! I'll go with you.
You want to join in the game?
No, but I want to watch. It'll be like a date.
Yo, Rai.

I dunno. She just looks like a regular girl to me.
Sob
She's so hot!
Whoa, swoon!
The hell it isn't! You're so friggin lucky! I mean, Rathe's a doll!
You don't wanna know what I'm thinking right now, do you?
What the hell's wrong with you?!
It's not that kind of relationship, dude.
How far have you gotten with Rathe, man?
Heh, look. Here comes our biggest rival.
Hm?
She's even got a really sweet personality!
Dude, they don't come much better-looking than that.
Oh, good, she's gorgeous!
Rathe!

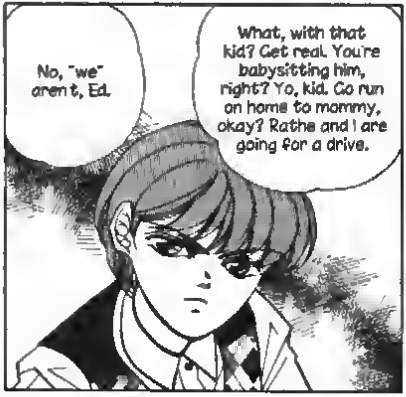
That little squirt? You gotta be kidding me.
Nope. Rathe met him playing in the park by himself the other day. He's been stuck to her like glue every weekend since.
Dorks. If you like her that much, why don't you tell her?
That's fair! I wanna sit on her lap too!
Oh my god, he's sitting on her lap!
Hands off, pipsqueak! If we can't touch her, neither can you!
He thinks he can get away with anything, just because he's a little kid!
The little snot!
Pervert
He's had his eye on Rathe for a while. Follows her around everywhere, asking her out, like, six times a day.
Prick.
Yeah. He thinks he's all that, but he ain't.
Who, Ed?
Jerk. Can't stand him
Shit
Here comes another pain in the butt.


I've got a pair of tickets to the NBA finals on Sunday. Care to go with me?

Hey, Rathe.
Ed.

Sorry. I can't. I already have plans for Sunday.

I'm kinda in the middle of a date right now.
Look, Ed, I'm sorry, but do you mind?
How 'bout the Major League game the week after that?
N-no. I'm busy next weekend.
Then how about next week's soccer game?


No, "we" aren't, Ed.
What, with that kid? Get real. You're babysitting him, right? Yo, kid. Go run on home to mommy, okay? Rathe and I are going for a drive.

Right, Willie?
Right!

Ed, just give up and go home already. Please?
Come on. My car's parked right over there. You know you want to.
RATHE!!
?!

No way! Did you see that?!
That was no accident. Somebody was controlling that truck...
...with tele-kinesis.
Are you three okay?!

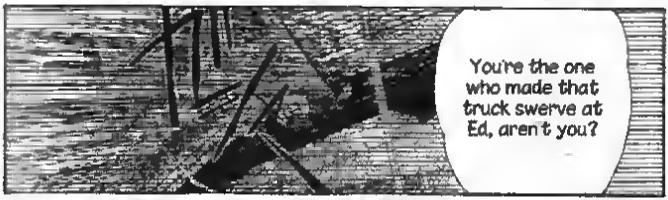
Thanks for walking me home, Rai.
No prob.
Um, Rathe? When are you going to see Willie again?
Hmm...next Saturday, I think.
You mind if I tag along?

Hmm
Really. I swear.
Really?
N-no. Nothing in particular.
Not really, no. Why? Is there something wrong?
'night.
Well, okay. See you tomorrow, Rai.

Rathe, can we go roller-skating again tomorrow?
I'm getting tired.
How about we take a break for a bit?
Awesome, Willie! You're doing so well for your first time on skates.
Thanks, Willie. You're my best little bud.
Oh.
But I'm free all next weekend. We can go roller-skating then, okay?
I've got plans tomorrow.
I'm sorry Willie, I can't.
Why, thank you. You're such a cute little guy.
FUCK!
You're my best friend too, Rathe. I love you a bunch! ♡

I'll go get us some drinks. Back in a minute!
Okay.
What? If there's something you wanna say kid, spit it out.
You stole Rathe from me.
"Stole"? Look, kid, Rathe doesn't "belong" to you. Or to me, for that matter.
You invited her to that basketball game. Now she can't play with me tomorrow.
So you're stealing her from me!
Rathe didn't tell him that! Is he reading my mind...?!

Hey kid...
...do you have ESP?


You're the one who made that truck swerve at Ed, aren't you?

That jerk deserved it. He tried to take Rathe away from me.
You little—
I'd think twice about stealing Rathe from me, mister.
Bad things might happen to you.

Rat!
Could you give me a hand?
Yeah sure. Coming.
I can't carry all this.

Damn!
Rat!
Ow...
The nut holding the wheel on came loose?
That evil little pipsqueak!

Heh.
I...tripped on a rock, that's all. I'm fine.
Just wasn't looking where I was going, really.
Rai, are you okay? What made you fall like that?
Rathe is not carrying all of those! At least give me a hand!
RATHE!
I'll carry your cap.
Oh, okay. Carry these for me, would you?
HEY!
Bye-bye, Rathe.
See you next Saturday, Willie.

You seriously haven't noticed...?
Tell what?
No, he's not. Can't you tell?
Oh no!
He is a normal kid, Rai.
Hard to see him as a normal kid.
I just remembered! I left my bag in the park!
Oh no! It's probably been stolen by now
It'll be over there
I'll go get it. You stay here, okay?
EEEEK!

RATHE!
HOLD IT RIGHT THERE, BRAT!!

No.
Rathe isn't one of your toys, kid. She's not yours to keep. Now let her go!
I already told you, mister. If you try to steal her away from me...
...not anybody, ever!
Rathe is mine! Nobody else can have her, not you...

...you might get hurt.
SLAM!
You've got ESP too, right mister?
You'd better fight back soon...

...or you're gonna die!
Rai, NO!
THAT'S IT! YOU ASKED FOR IT!
?!

He's a little killer! If we let him go now, somebody's gonna pay for it later!
How can you do that, Rai?! He's just a little kid!

Rathe?

What's with you, Rathe? Just whose side are you on?!
Rai! Don't!

I can't help it! He's a lot...
You see what he's doing. He's really got you under his spell, hasn't he? How can you side with the brat?

HUH?! Wh-where the hell did that question come from?!

What... you jealous?

...like you, Rai!
Huh?

RAI!!

HEY!
EEEEK!

Rai.
Down there.
What happened to Willie? Where is he?
Don't worry, he's fine.
I held back as much as I could, but he still got knocked unconscious.

Hey kid, you awake?
Are you hurt?
Thank god. Willie, are you okay?
Nnn...
Willie...!
Willie...
I
Who...are you?

I can't.
I do telekinesis, not clairvoyance.
Aren't you watching?
Okay.
Oh. Give me your hand, then.
Yeah.
Can you see him?

Can you see now?
Yeah.
You can hear him too, right?
Where on earth have you been? I've been so worried!
I don't know.
You... don't know?
Willie!
Mama!
Some nice people brought me home, though. A pretty lady and a tall man.
Well, that was very kind of them. Where are they now?

I don't know. They left.
The little tyke, oh-so-conveniently forgetting only the memories of us...
Yep.
It looks like his ESP has gone, too. I think, maybe...
...it was his possessiveness of me that triggered those powers in the first place.
That reminds me.
Oh, yeah.

Oh yes you are.
I am not!
Oh, lots of little things. It's kinda hard to put into words. Hmm... Well, for a start, you're both brats...
What the hell makes you think I have anything in common with that brat?
Willie actually told me that he loved me.
Unlike somebody I could name
?!
You know, you might be very similar, but I think I like Willie best.

What was that?
I couldn't hear it.
Um
...Rathe... I...um...
Peek
!
I love you.

I love you, too, Rai.
We're back.

YOINK
Hiyas, Rathe. How've you been?
YIKES!!
Um—
Good evening.
Oh. Hello, Rathe.
PAT
Forget it, Al. You're not weaseling you way out of this one.
You'll hang out for a while, right? Maybe have something to drink? Coffee? Soda?
Why bother? Just ignore 'em.
B-but...
Let's go, Rathe.

Small Prince/END

The Talk

by Match

Hi, everyone! Thanks for buying a copy of RA-I! This is a title I originally drew a long, long time ago (for a different publisher, even..~~). Looking back at it now, it's not the best art I've done. The original sketches were a mess and I never had enough time to fix them. It wasn't a project I planned to revisit, but we received so much fan mail begging for more RA-I that it was eventually decided to publish the title as a standalone volume. I didn't have the time to touch up everything I wanted, but I hope you enjoyed it anyway.

Truth be told, I started drawing a lot of the original sketches for this over four years ago, but never finished any of them. Coming back to it now and trying to finish them was tough! But I'm really glad RA-I finally made it into bookstores. Really.

Bwahaha! bb

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